

SARL NEWS - SUNDAY 29 JULY 2012

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Your newsreader this morning is (name), (call sign), on 145,725 MHz FM from Pretoria with relays on 7 066 and 3 695 kHz SSB. (Other news readers change to suit).

IN THE NEWS TODAY:

SOLAR MAXIMUM PREDICTED NEXT YEAR NASA ASTRONAUT SPINS DISCS FROM SPACE THE ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS AMENDMENT BILL - HOW WILL IT AFFECT AMATEUR RADIO? BOOK NOW FOR THE RTA IN GAUTENG ON 18 AUGUST

You are listening to ZS6SRL. Stay tuned for more details on these items and other important and interesting items.

SOLAR MAXIMUM PREDICTED NEXT YEAR

Forecasters say Solar Max is due in the year 2013. When it arrives, the peak of 11-year sunspot cycle will bring more solar flares, more coronal mass ejections, more geomagnetic storms and more auroras than experienced in quite some time. On the weekend of 14 July 2012, sky watchers around the world got a taste of things to come.

It was early Saturday evening in South Africa when a coronal mass ejection or "CME" crashed into Earth's magnetic field and triggered the most sustained display of auroras in years. For more than 36 hours, magnetic storms circled Earth's poles. Northern Lights spilled across the Canadian border into the United States as far south as California, Colorado, Kansas, and Arkansas. In the southern hemisphere, skies turned red over Tasmania and New Zealand, while the aurora australis pirouetted around the South Pole.

The source of the CME was giant sunspot AR1520, a seething nest of tangled magnetism more than 15 times wider than Earth itself. On July 12th, the sunspot's magnetic field erupted, producing an X-class solar flare and hurling a billion tons of electrified plasma toward our planet.

Learn more about what happens on the sun and how it affects HF propagation. Attend the RTA on 18 August at the NARC.

NASA ASTRONAUT SPINS DISCS FROM SPACE

NASA astronaut Joe Acaba will host a two-hour special radio broadcast on the Internet radio station Third Rock Radio while aboard the International Space Station, 306 kilometres above Earth. “The Joe Show: New Rock from Space” will debut at 22:00 CAT on Friday 3 August.

Acaba, a fan of classic rock, will discuss his experiences aboard the orbiting laboratory while presenting new rock to listeners around the world. The Joe Show is a blend of science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM) and art. It highlights the latest technology, all within the context of “exploring new worlds of music.”

“I’m excited to be the first astronaut to DJ from space on Third Rock Radio,” Acaba said. “From the recordings launched aboard the Voyager spacecraft to the wakeup songs on shuttle missions, NASA and music have a long history together. As a former educator, I also appreciate the strong links between music and maths, one of the core STEM components that is so critical to my work as an astronaut.”

To stream Third Rock Radio over the Internet, visit: www.thirdrockradio.net.

Share this information with a young person near you. They will enjoy the fun.

THE ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS AMENDMENT BILL - HOW WILL IT AFFECT AMATEUR RADIO?

The Department of Communications is planning to create another body next to ICASA to take over spectrum management. One of the many changes proposed in the Electronic Communications Amendment Bill, 2012 is the establishment of a Spectrum Management Agency within the portfolio of the Minister of Communications with the overall responsibility for the country’s spectrum as contemplated in the White paper on Broadcasting Policy, 1998.

The explanatory document addendum to the bill states that the Minister of Communications acts as the custodian of the spectrum on behalf of the people of South Africa. It further states that the Minister represents South Africa in the ITU. This includes inter alia the allocation of the radio frequency spectrum to various radio communication services, like amateur radio. The minister is responsible under the new act, once implemented, for all international spectrum matters pertaining to South Africa, including Regional and sub-Regional spectrum planning, all cases concerning international harmful interference and international frequency coordination.

The SARL Council is currently studying the draft bill. A copy is available on www.sarl.org.za, follow the link from the home page. The document has 65 pages and is 3 Megs in size. Radio amateurs are invited to send comment to the SARL by 15 August Please address comments to secretary@sarl.org.za. The final date for comment to DOC is 30 August 2012.

BOOK NOW FOR THE RTA IN GAUTENG ON 18 AUGUST

Bookings have opened for the Radio Technology in Action Symposium to be held at the National Amateur Radio Centre on Saturday 18 August 2012. Full details of the symposium are available on line at www.sarl.org.za.

You can pre book and take part in an additional prize draw for the ARRL Book "Basic Antennas". If you like a programme to be sent to your inbox send an email to rta@sarl.org.za with RTA NARC in the subject line and a PDF copy will be mailed to you.

CLUB NEWS

The West Rand ARC held its AGM on the 7th July 2012 and the following members were elected to the committee:

Chairman - Geoff Levey, ZS6GRL Vice Chairman - Johan van Vuuren, ZS6JV
Secretary - Phillip van Tonder, ZS6PVT Treasurer - David Cloete, ZR6AOC

Additional members: Willem Weideman, ZS6WWJ Romeo Nardini, ZS6ARQ
John Brock, ZS6WL Rory Crouch, ZS6RBJ Nick Dreyer, ZS6NCK Noel Hammond, ZR6DX Marinus Brand, ZS6BM

The Centurion Radio Amateur Club held its annual general meeting on the 14th July. The following office bearers were elected:

Chairman : Pam Momberg, ZS6APT Vice Chairman : Grawie Basson, ZS6GJJ
Secretary : Billy Strumphers, ZS6WPS Treasurer : Pam Momberg, ZS6APT

Ordinary Members: Pine Pienaar, ZS6GST Ben Booyens, ZS6BTB Rian Vente, r
ZS6RXY John Longland, ZS6AA

COMPETITION NEWS

IARU HF World Championships

This competition took place on the 14th to the 15th July. The SARL decided to enter a team for this contest using the new ZS9HQ callsign.

The CW team consisted of the following operators: Vidi La Grange, ZS1EL, Raoul Coetzee, ZS1REC, Allan Smith, ZS1AAX, Joop Hesp ,ZS6C, and Pierre van Deventer, ZS6A.

The SSB team of operators consisted of Nigel Burgess, ZR6NGB, Roy McKay, ZS6RLM, Noel Hammond, ZR6DX, Rikus Joubert, ZS6RIC, and Geoff Levey, ZS6GRL. The SSB team operated from the NARC, with the exception of Nigel, who operated from his home QTH.

In total 512 contacts were made which is made up of 141 SSB contacts and 371 CW contacts. In total 116 HQ stations were worked across the various bands. The comments that were received are that although the bands did not always play fair everyone who took part enjoyed the contest.

Many thanks to all the team members for their time and effort, it is appreciated by all the SARL members.

The SARL's premier contest will be run during the month of August. The SARL HF Contest consists of three parts - the SARL HF Phone Contest on Sunday 5 August, the SARL HF Digital Contest on Sunday 19 August and the SARL HF CW Contest on Sunday 26 August.

The aim of the SARL HF Contests is for participants to contact as many amateurs in Southern Africa as possible on 20, 40 and 80 metres using phone, digital modes and CW. There are a number of trophies to be won for participation in these contests. The trophies are handed out during the SARL Awards Dinner.

The SARL HF Phone contest will be run from 13:00 to 16:30 UTC [15:00 to 18:30 CAT] on Sunday 5 August with activity on 14 125 to 14 300 kHz; 7 060 to 7 100 and 7 130 to 7 200 kHz and 3 600 to 3 650 and 3 700 to 3 800 kHz.

Participation can be as a a) Single Operator Single Band; b) Single Operator All Band; c) Multi Operator Single Band or d) Multi Operator All Band. Individual competitors and club stations are encouraged to compete. The exchange is a RS report and a consecutive serial number starting at 001.

Each phone QSO counts 1 point. Count two points for each area (see below) on each band and count 2 points for each station contacted on all three bands.

The areas are - Area 1: ZS1 Western Cape; Area 2: ZS2 Eastern Cape; Area 3: ZS3 Northern Cape; Area 4: ZS4 Free State; Area 5: ZS5 KwaZulu-Natal; Area 6: ZS6 Gauteng, Mpumalanga; Limpopo and North West; Area 7: 3B8 Mauritius, 3DA Swaziland, 7P Lesotho, 7Q Malawi, C9 Mozambique, Z2 Zimbabwe, 5R Madagascar, FR Reunion Island and FH Mayotte and Area 8: 9J Zambia, A2 Botswana, D2 Angola, V5 Namibia, ZD9 Gough and Tristan da Cunha Islands, ZS7 Antarctica and ZS8 Marion Island. Contacts with stations outside these areas are allowed, QSO points may be claimed but no zone or three-bander points may be claimed.

Certificates are awarded to the first three places and the highest single band score in each contest. There is also a trophy for the highest combined score in three contests. Logs must be sent to the Bloemfontein ARC, Box 33211, Fichardt Park, 9317 or by e-mail to zs4bfm@netactive.co.za by Sunday 12 August.

HF PROPAGATION REPORT

Hannes Coetzee, ZS6BZP, reports that the week's expected solar activity will be at low levels. None of the Earth-facing sunspots are posing a threat for strong solar flares.

For those who want to do their own frequency predictions, the expected effective sunspot number for the week will be around 55.

All the bands from 20 to 10 m will provide lots of DX fun with 20 m providing the best openings with 15 m not far behind. 10 m openings will be less frequent due to the lower solar activity.

Please visit www.spaceweather.co.za for further information.

DIARY OF EVENTS

3 August - Astronaut Joe Acaba will host "The Joe Show: New Rock from Space". 6 August - SARL HF-competition, 13:00 to 16:30 UTC. 15 August - ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS AMENDMENT BILL, last date to send comments to the SARL by email to secretary@sarl.org.za. 18 August - RTA in GAUTENG, pre-book now to also enter for an additional prize draw. 19 August - SARL HF digital competition. 26 August - SARL HF CW competition.

SARL News invites clubs and individuals to submit news items of interest to radio amateurs and shortwave listeners. Submit news items if possible - in both English and Afrikaans to www.sarl.org.za/newsinbox.asp, not later than the Thursday preceding the bulletin date.

The SARL also invites you to listen to Amateur Radio Today every Sunday morning at 10:00 CAT on 145,750 MHz in the Pretoria area, with relays on 7 082, 7 205 and 17 760 kHz. There is also a podcast by Dick, ZS6RO. For a web-stream and Echolink by ZS6FCS, visit www.sarl.org.za, click on 'Amateur Radio Today', go down the green column and click on 'LISTEN ON THE WEB'. A repeat transmission can be heard on Mondays at 17:30 UTC on 3230 kHz. Sentech sponsors the ARMI transmissions on the non-amateur frequencies.

You have listened to a bulletin of the South African Radio League, compiled by Johan Steyn, ZS4SS, and edited by George Honiball, ZS6NE.

Thank you for listening. 73. /EX